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ABSTRACT

This publication presents a series of steps that can be used by employers to initiate or modify a diversity program. It is based on a study of a nationally recognized model developed by the City of San Diego. Fifteen steps that are considered elements of San Diego's success are described, using the city's experience. The steps are as follows: secure commitment from the top; assign qualified staff; write a mission statement and define the terms; conduct external and internal research; present the strategy to top management; secure the money; establish a steering committee; develop partnerships; develop the program; conduct diversity training; encourage department activities on diversity; establish a speakers' bureau; tell the story and keep everyone informed; hear advice from those who have done it; and keep the vision and act on it. Exhibits that make up almost one-half of the publication include the following: interview questions for the City of San Diego; focus group questionnaire; supervisors' diversity commitment pre-session and post-session questionnaires; invitation from City Manager to attend diversity training; learning goals; handout on what is meant by cultural diversity; and speakers' bureau topics. (YLB)

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HOW TO DEVELOP A DIVERSITY COMMITMENT

Based on a Case Study on Diversity in The City of San Diego, California

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Fifteen Steps in Developing a Diversity Commitment

Based on a Case Study on Diversity in The City of San Diego, California

Introduction

The American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) has a long-time commitment to enhance work opportunities for adults 50 years and older. Task forces, publications and training programs have helped thousands of individuals to find meaningful employment while meeting employers' needs.

AARP believes that working with individuals is not enough. It also has a commitment to provide employers with resources so that age becomes irrelevant in personnel decisions.

In the complex work environment of the 1990s, it has become increasingly clear that age cannot be viewed in isolation. In fact, age is but one element of a diverse work force.

The purpose of this publication is to present a series of steps that can be used by employers to initiate or modify a diversity program. Diversity is best understood by defining several approaches to equity and fairness in the work place.

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO):

A general term used to refer to federal, state and local laws that prohibit discrimination in employment. It is the original legal effort to ensure that people have access to jobs regardless of their race, gender, age, color, national origin or religion.

Affirmative Action:

A proactive response to remedy past discrimination or to ensure compliance with EEO laws when certain employees have been isolated within the organization. The law requires employers to demonstrate their efforts to integrate themselves at all levels. If they do not, a court could order them to set business goals to

The purpose of this publication is to present a series of steps that can be used by employers to initiate or modify a diversity program.

increase employment of minorities and women in jobs where they are underrepresented in relationship to their availability.

Diversity:

Focuses on valuing all people equally. It is internally driven and voluntary.

The City of San Diego, California, uses the term diversity commitment rather than diversity program. A program conveys a short-term effort, one that has a beginning and an end; but commitment is ongoing, organizational and comprehensive. San Diego's Diversity Commitment is designed to create cultural change where both individuals and the organization adapt.

According to Dr. Oliver Brown, organization specialist for the City of San Diego, "Diversity is the next step after affirmative action. Now that we have the people, how do we help them work together to be productive?"

Diversity programs are neither new nor are they all the same. Major corporations such as Corning, Inc.; IBM; Hughes Aircraft, Inc.; Hewlett-Packard Company; Chevron Corporation; Levi Strauss and Co.; and Procter & Gamble have been recognized for their diversity programs. There is more than one good approach.

For this publication, we have selected a nationally recognized model developed by the City of San Diego. This model has received numerous awards and is highly regarded by both the public and private sectors. Demand for information and consultation from both city governments and industry has motivated San Diego to create a separate agency, the Centre for Organization Effectiveness, to assist employers in all sectors to address diversity issues.

"Diversity is the next step after affirmative action. Now that we have the people, how do we help them work together to be productive?"

Methodology

AARP studied San Diego's Diversity Commitment as a model case study. In January 1994, 13 in-depth interviews were conducted with the following selected city employees: the City Manager, Assistant City Manager, Director of the Centre for Organization Effectiveness, two specialists in Organization Effectiveness, Labor Relations Manager, Equal Employment Investigative Officer, Director of the Building Inspection Department, Supervising Economist, Revenue Analyst, Management Assistant–Building Inspection Department, Account Clerk and Purchasing Agent.

Questions were first developed and then submitted to Dr. Oliver Brown, who, in turn, arranged for the interviews. This report is based on the employees' responses, written materials they provided and the literature on diversity and human resource management.

Diversity programs are neither new
nor are they all the same.
There is more than
one good approach.

Rationale for the diversity commitment

In 1987, top managers from the City of San Diego were reviewing a list of employees qualified for promotions. The discussion was uneventful until a brave soul asked how many women and ethnic minorities were on the list (*The San Diego Union-Tribune*, January 24, 1993).

The list, not surprisingly, included primarily white men. A discussion followed about the city's need to attract and promote more women and ethnic minorities. The message was clearly conveyed to then-City Manager John Lockwood. He tapped the manager of the city's Organization Effectiveness Program to find a remedy for a bureaucracy that historically favored white men. Jack McGrory, Lockwood's successor, subsequently led the charge.

The following steps are considered elements of San Diego's success:

1. Secure commitment from the top.
2. Assign qualified staff.
3. Write a mission statement and define the terms.
4. Conduct external and internal research.
5. Present the strategy to top management.
6. Secure the money.
7. Establish a steering committee.
8. Develop partnerships.
9. Develop the program.
10. Conduct diversity training.
11. Encourage department activities on diversity.
12. Establish a speakers' bureau.
13. Tell the story and keep everyone informed.
14. Hear advice from those who have done it.
15. Keep the vision and act on it.

Each of these steps is described, using the City of San Diego's experience.

Keep the vision and act on it.

Step 1: Secure commitment from the top

When interviewees were asked, "What has made your program so successful?" all responded — "commitment from the top." The City Manager is the highest-level paid professional in city government — a role equivalent to a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of a corporation.

Jack McGrory, City Manager, expressed his clear support in several ways. First, he openly acknowledged that the city's work force had some real problems. Second, he made a commitment to diversity for the "long haul," initiating a total organizational effort and change, rather than a short-term program. Third, he successfully secured the funds from the City Council to implement the program.

All of these acts were strategic and effective. Yet McGrory believed that initiation and implementation were not enough; there must be an ongoing effort. Therefore he continues to support and engage in training, accountability policies, policy reviews and communication — all related to diversity.

For example, he begins each diversity training program with a 20-minute presentation explaining why diversity is important to him and the city. He notes that 42 percent of all legal immigrants settle in California; that one in four residents in San Diego come from another country. For example, in the last six months of 1993, 2,000 Somali families settled in San Diego. McGrory is committed to having San Diego city workers reflect the city's composition, and, equally important, work together.

To reinforce the importance of their diversity training, McGrory tells employees to take advantage of the times they are physically and mentally away from work, and discourages them from calling their offices during the training. He jests by saying, "Those who are at your office have a career opportunity — to do your job!"

The message of consistency of policy and accountability for behavior is strong. Adherence to the norms and values, which

The message of consistency of policy and accountability for behavior is strong.

require each employee to be treated with fairness, dignity and respect, is part of the written performance review for the top 350 managers. Complaints from within each manager's department also are used as part of that review.

The City Manager sets an example. For example, he fired five employees who did not adhere to the norms and values and canceled a contract for rented space with a youth organization because its director fired a leader (who was a city employee), solely because he was gay.

In addition to taking a hard line on making city employees responsible for their behaviors, the City Manager is available to these same employees. Each Friday morning, two hours are held open for any employee who wants to meet with McGrory. The only requirement is for the employee to make an appointment before the meeting. Many of the problems that McGrory hears deal with diversity, although the number has diminished since the Diversity Commitment was launched.

The newest communication effort of the City Manager is to meet with groups of 50 or more to discuss "how we can improve the ways we do business." He plans to speak with approximately 2,000 employees. Diversity issues are part of the dialogue.

Each Friday morning, two hours are held open for any employee who wants to meet with McGrory.

Step 2: Assign qualified staff

The staff responsible for the Diversity Commitment consists of three professionals. The lead person, Dr. Trudy Sopp, was the manager of the city's Organization Effectiveness Program and currently is Director of the Centre for Organization Effectiveness. Her team members helped develop the original plan for the Diversity Commitment and also teach the diversity training program. Dr. Danelle Scarborough was the Project Manager on a day-to-day basis, a position that is required for overall coordination. Dr. Oliver Brown's role focused on diversity training. Their respective Ph.D.'s are in sociology, education and organizational behavior. Each has an unequivocal belief in the diversity mission and strong skills in communication, organizational development, interpersonal relationships and training.

Dr. Sopp, using her own experience, suggests that a diversity manager should have the following qualifications:

- An excellent relationship with the City Manager or CEO;
- An established track record of "delivery";
- Excellent political skills and ability to "work the gray area" of the organization; knowing how to back off, yet be assertive; and an understanding that some people will be vying for power;
- An IOU base because a diversity manager will need to collect on some of these;
- Knowledge about how to get funding;
- Knowledge of small group theory and qualitative methods for purposes of research; and
- A strong philosophy — the diversity manager may have to cut deals. It is important to know when to take a hard line and when to negotiate and give in, while retaining the principles and integrity of the effort.

For those individuals who are interested in going into diversity management, Dr. Sopp advises the following guidelines:

- Make sure that the person at the top has the character to do what is necessary. Any flaws in that person's character will play out in a diversity commitment.
- Don't take on the diversity responsibility with the wrong boss. If a new boss is coming in, rethink whether or not you

Expect your job to change.

want to take on such a project.
- Be staffed for the job.
- Expect your job to change.
- If you are managing diversity and fulfilling another job, the diversity job will engulf the other one.

All team members consider themselves "messengers," that is, those who speak to individual employees and groups about the value of a diversity commitment. To effectively convey the message, Dr. Sopp makes these recommendations based on the collective experience of the City of San Diego:

- Be unequivocal in your belief in diversity.
- Listen, understand and sympathize from everyone's point of view. Believe their issue is true for them.
- Be non-defensive.
- Don't agree with criticisms. If you do, you will lose credibility.
- Assume you will overcome all problems.
- Don't take criticism and rejection personally.
- Be relentless; you will be "beaten on." Many will think diversity issues are irrelevant.
- Don't align with any advocacy groups. Their causes are narrow and are likely to turn others off.
- Remain an advocate for diversity in the most inclusive manner.

Assume you will overcome all problems.

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Step 3: Write a mission statement and define the terms

A mission statement is the central theme of an organization. It motivates employees and creates a focus for their efforts. The following mission statement and terms are the basis for San Diego's Diversity Commitment:

To create an environment where differences are valued and all city employees are a productive part of a high-performing team delivering services to our citizens.

San Diego's norms and values:

The following norms and values grew out of the first diversity educational session attended by the City Manager's office, department directors and employees from different levels in the organization:

- Value each other's diversity.
- Treat each person with dignity, fairness and respect.
- Care for, support and nurture one another.
- Provide ongoing performance feedback in a caring, straightforward and helpful way.
- Challenge those employment practices and behaviors that do not contribute to a work place that values diversity.
- Use and be receptive to straight talk for open, honest communication.
- Support and expect excellent customer service, to see things through our customer's eyes.
- Value the participation of employees and encourage high-performing teams.
- Honor the public's trust. Manage and use city resources as carefully as if they were your own.
- Support and reward entrepreneurial management, innovation and risk taking. Recognize that there will be successes and failures.
- Celebrate our successes, our work and our people.

Diversity:

Diversity focuses on "the changing demographics of the work force, including ethnicity, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion and family status" (*Diversity Update*, The City of San Diego).

"A diversity commitment is conceptual in nature; [it is] not tied to specific legislation. Diversity is a state of mind, a fabric that becomes woven into the work place" (Larry Gardner, Labor Relations Manager).

"Diversity
is a state of mind,
a fabric that becomes
woven into the work place."

Step 4: Conduct external and internal research

The first research step was external. The staff reviewed diversity programs used by both public and private sectors and programs developed by consultants.

Next, consultants and staff gathered data reflecting city employees' needs and concerns. Approximately 10 percent of the 10,000 city employees were randomly selected through the Personnel Department's computer-generated program. They received invitations to attend group interviews about diversity issues. The sample of employees selected were from the following categories:

- Clerical and support
- Crafts and laborer
- Fire Department
- Management and administration
- Police Department
- Professional and technical

Those selected were then divided into the following ethnic groups:

- Asian/Pacific Islands
- Black/African American
- Hispanic/Latino
- Native American
- White

These groups were each divided into groups of women and men. In addition to the data collected from the focus-group interviews, city employees were invited to participate in five Open Forum Focus Groups:

- Employees with disabilities
- Foreign-born employees
- Gay and lesbian employees
- Older employees
- Working parents

As a result, 74 focus groups were held for 1,000 employees. Questions included: What is going well? What are you concerned about? *(Exhibit 1)* Additionally, focus-group participants were asked to complete a confidential questionnaire which was designed to rate the organization on variables such as teamwork, supervisors' receptivity to new ideas and caring for dependent elders. *(Exhibit 2)*

Approximately 200 observations about diversity issues were organized around the following themes: equitable service, bureaucracy, leadership, performance management, rewards, career development, promotion, communication, health and safety, flexible and personal benefits, and specific issues around inclusion and participation of people of color and white women. The issue of greatest concern to most participants was promotion.

After all the data were collected, more than 100 feedback sessions were held to share the results. The information was presented to employees, supervisors, managers, the Mayor's advisory groups, appointed Commissioners, employee unions and specific requests from city departments.

After all the data were collected, more than 100 feedback sessions were held to share the results.

Step 5: Present the strategy to top management

The Director of the Centre for Organization Effectiveness and her assistant presented a detailed proposal to the City Manager and his staff for a Diversity Commitment. The plan included communication and marketing strategies, training for the total city work force, linkages to city departments and divisions, policies and procedures, costs, norms and values and evaluation strategies.

Because the proposal was so comprehensive, those who presented the plan believed it would never be approved. Much to their surprise, the City Manager said, "Go do it."

When the diversity team was asked why the City Manager approved the request, they said, "He knew we could get the job done."

Step 6: Secure the money

In San Diego, as in other cities, the City Council holds the purse strings. To get funding for this ambitious project, the City Manager requested $350,000 and presented a case that a commitment to diversity is good business. For example, if the issue of diversity were not addressed, discrimination would likely continue. Losing one or two discrimination lawsuits would be equal to or greater than the allocation he was requesting.

A motion by one City Council member to cut the budget was not seconded. The passage of the funding request was extraordinary. The final allocation of funds totaled $460,000.

If the City Council cuts future budget requests, the City Manager has developed a "Plan B," which decreases the use of outside consultants and transfers additional training and development tasks to current staff. This plan is consistent with current corporate and nonprofit challenges of "doing more with less."

"Go do it."

Step 7: Establish a steering committee

A steering committee was appointed to make policy recommendations to the City Manager, who has oversight responsibility for the Diversity Commitment. Chaired by the Assistant City Manager, the committee's work includes program design, policy review and recommendations, "fine-tuning" and addressing controversies surrounding the program.

Members are appointed by the City Manager and represent important functional positions as well as diversity. They include the Assistant City Manager; Personnel Director; Labor Relations Manager; Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) Investigative Officer; city employees from various departments who are Hispanic, Black, or Filipino; gay men and lesbian women and the diversity team. Recently a representative from the labor unions was added. The committee has been meeting for the past three years at a fixed time every two weeks for one hour.

Step 8: Develop partnerships

Partnerships were developed with departments that "shared the turf." During the conceptual development of the diversity commitment, the team met with individuals from the employee assistance, labor relations and personnel departments. Clearly their areas of responsibility would be directly affected by diversity changes. Therefore they were consulted in the very early phases and also were asked to be members of the Steering Committee so that the development and implementation of the program would be coordinated and would reflect the needs of key departments.

Members are appointed by the City Manager and represent important functional positions as well as diversity.

Step 9: Develop the program

Of the 25 consultants who responded to the request for proposal to develop a Diversity Commitment, 11 were interviewed. Criteria for selection included an accurate understanding of the problems, solutions to address them, the intent to facilitate change within the organization and a sincere commitment to the value of diversity. Additional qualities were their reputation, commitment, ideals and values. The firm chosen, The Kaleel Jamison Consulting Group, Inc., from Cincinnati, Ohio, took a firm stand regarding their requirements to create an environment that valued diversity. Unlike some other respondents who omitted parts of the program just to reduce costs and get the contract, the Ohio group did not water down their proposal just to please the city.

"It was a rocky road at first," said Dr. Sopp. "We thought we knew it all. They told us we didn't know what we were talking about. As time went on, we developed a trust of each other" and the rest is a success story.

The staff realized that consultants could take them only so far. According to one specialist in organizational effectiveness, "consultants provide the cookbook for training." However, "they don't buy the eggs, crack them or clean up." The staff makes the project work. For example, it is the staff, not consultants, who spend days selecting participants. Time is invested to identify participants who represent various departments, diversity and jobs.

Consultants were instrumental in conducting focus groups, developing questionnaires, analyzing data and presenting results to various constituencies. They also developed the diversity-training program and conducted many of the sessions. At the same time, they trained staff for the transition by taking over part of the staff development and training.

Their Diversity Commitment goal is illustrated by their logo which depicts diverse individuals working together to weave a beautiful piece of fabric. The logo has been translated into pins, posters, T-shirts and bookmarks with recommended readings about diversity on the reverse side. A diversity T-shirt was the first item sold at the newly opened city store.

The success of the Diversity Commitment was measured by response to questionnaires before and after the diversity training. *(Exhibits 3 and 4)* Participants gave high ratings to their knowledge of different cultures, understanding diversity issues and their ability to address such issues based on their training. Success criteria for the larger organization were not formally identified.

Consultants were instrumental in conducting focus groups, developing questionnaires, analyzing data and presenting results to various constituencies.

Step 10: Conduct diversity training

The diversity training program is conducted on four consecutive workdays and held off site. Approximately 50 employees participate in each session and are required to attend an orientation prior to the training.

These orientation sessions are organized into "like" groups: Men of Color, Women of Color, Gay and Lesbian, White Men and White Women. Although some employees found it troublesome to identify with a group because they felt labeled, they still participated. The assumption underlying the meeting of "like" groups is that employees will discuss their concerns with those sharing the same primary group identification. *(Exhibits 5 and 6)*

Supervisors were the first group targeted for the program, and were selected according to race, ethnicity, gender, age and department. In many cases, departments that typically work together are included in the same session. After all supervisors complete the program, employees from the next level down are invited to attend and are referred to as learning partners. As of February 1994, 1,000 employees participated, including almost all supervisors and a large number of learning partners.

The training program is highly interactive and consists of the following content areas: building a learning community, confidentiality, prejudice, how people see things differently, partnerships, sexism, woman/man style differences, attraction and harassment in the work place, racism, the Hispanic experience, oppression and its effect, gay and lesbian issues, planning, support systems and future actions. *(Exhibit 7)*

Informal feedback from program participants has been extremely positive. Comments from several of those interviewed highlighted the outcome of increased self-awareness.

- *I needed to learn that it is important to be considerate of what you say.*
- *People understand me better.*
- *I am more tolerant and self-analytical. I wonder why I react to certain behaviors the way I do.*
- *I have an increased awareness of gay and lesbian issues. Their issues aren't primarily sexual. They can't take off for their anniversaries or lover's birthdays. They feel left out.*
- *Black women may have to try three times as hard (as white women).*

The assumption underlying the meeting of "like" groups is that employees will discuss their concerns with those sharing the same primary group identification.

- *I didn't know I was prejudiced. The program helped me look through someone else's eyes.*
- *I will speak up now when I hear racist remarks. I've removed rock tapes from my car because of racist lyrics.*
- *I will tell a person now if he or she is inappropriate.*
- *I've become more aware and sensitive...I thought I was really sensitive since I started as a grounds-maintenance worker 10 years ago, picking up trash and cleaning restrooms. (He currently holds a senior management position.)*

The training program also has generated more than 50 policy and procedural changes citywide. For example:

- Hiring and promotional interview panel members are selected to better represent employee and applicant diversity. Gender, ethnicity, age and multilingual capabilities are considered in panel selection.
- The Personnel Department provides feedback on promotional tests and interviews.
- The Equal Employment Investigative Office was relocated to give employees greater confidentiality in getting information and making complaints.
- A monthly meeting is held with unions and informal city employee groups to get information and discuss pertinent diversity issues.
- Diversity newsletters are published.

The program helped me look through someone else's eyes.

Step 11: Encourage department activities on diversity

Employees who attended the diversity training were encouraged to apply their experience to existing needs in their individual departments. The diversity team was pushing for the ripple effect and it worked. Some examples are:

City Attorney's Office:

Employers conduct role-playing exercises monthly that deal with a diversity issue.

Clean Water Program:

Employees formed a diversity committee to serve as a catalyst for all the departments' diversity-related activities. They hold monthly meetings encouraging open discussion, publish a newsletter, conduct brown bag lunches with speakers and plan social events, such as ethnic potluck meals and tennis tournaments.

Auditor's Office:

Employees write articles on diversity for their newsletter, have started a suggestion box, and hold brown bag lunches where they show educational diversity videos and invite speakers from the speakers' bureau to discuss diversity issues.

Engineering and Development Design Group:

Employees conducted a divisional survey and have developed a mini-educational series for senior staff.

Purchasing Department:

The chairperson of the diversity effort develops learning sessions and plans social activities that help to keep everyone connected.

Revenue Analysis:

The chairperson and her 11-member committee are beginning to develop information on how to describe what a Diversity Commitment consists of.

The diversity team was pushing for the ripple effect and it worked.

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Step 12: Establish a speakers' bureau

The speakers' bureau is staffed by city employees who have attended the diversity training program, have expressed a passion for the mission and can articulate their views.

The diversity team developed 35 topic areas. *(Exhibit 8)* The diversity team matches requests for topics to individuals on the speakers list. Each presentation is made by two speakers who are of different gender or race or age.

Step 13: Tell the story and keep everyone informed

The diversity staff plans a major role in speaking to city and community groups. In 1992-93, almost 100 presentations were made to various city departments and associations, such as building inspection, police, library, parks and recreation and the Arab-American Employees Association. Presentations were made to more than 25 outside (noncity) groups including high schools, universities and hospitals. The diversity staff make themselves available almost around the clock. Diversity presentations have been made at midnight to the firefighters, at 6:00 a.m. to waste-management workers and early Sunday mornings to community church groups.

Newsletters, conferences and the media also have been used effectively to communicate the message.

Diversity Update:

A newsletter published biweekly and distributed to all supervisors in the organization.

Newspaper articles:

The press has been positive as reflected in the news coverage. Diversity staff have made numerous conference presentations at the League of California Cities as well as other national conferences such as the Organizational Development Network and Center for Creative Leadership.

The diversity staff make themselves available almost around the clock.

Step 14: Hear advice from those who have done it

The diversity staff's advice to those who wanted to start a diversity commitment included:

- Make sure your leader has the character and determination to pull it off.
- Present a convincing case to those making budget allocations; use business reasoning.
- If there is a crisis, use it in presenting your case.
- Do your research.
- Expect resistance; some may be offended, such as white males often referred to as the white male backlash.
- Listen to resistance and develop ways to overcome it.
- Be willing to take some heat.
- Have a good marketing plan.
- Realize that a work force commitment to diversity takes longer than you think. It is not a quick fix; it's a change in culture.
- Be cautious in partnering with advocacy groups.
- Watch for "political correctness."
- Be ready for a surprise when you lift the "rock" and start probing the real issues.
- Follow through on what you say you are going to do; accountability is strong and people are watching.

According to the Labor Relations Manager, Larry Gardner, diversity commitment is imperative in the 1990s:

"There must be a willingness for executives, managers and politicians to make a commitment to reality. Unless we educate our employees and communities that there is value in people, we are destined to failure from an organizational and community standpoint. A diversity commitment is about humanity. The principles of this commitment are applicable when you walk out of the door, when you go home, as well as in the work place."

Realize that a work force commitment to diversity takes longer than you think. It is not a quick fix; it's a change in culture.

Step 15: Keep the vision and act on it

Leaders of the diversity team have established a new target: the community. The City Manager says, "Diversity can't stand by itself." To build high-performing teams, it's important to build partnerships with the community that is served.

A San Diego Consortium, which was an outgrowth of the National Conference of Christians and Jews, examined ways to bring diversity education into the community with a goal of removing racism by the year 2000. The city's diversity team and consultants provided a beginning to the solution. They conducted community sessions for leaders of nonprofit organizations, bankers, business people and public agency groups.

With an emphasis on high-performing teams, plans are being developed to provide diversity training for city employees who serve the same geographic area. For example, firefighters, police and librarians serving the same area would be trained together. Next, community leaders and the city employees will be part of the same training group and encouraged to form a partnership or strategic work unit.

In addition to city employees and community leaders, the diversity team raises questions affecting other stakeholders. For example, the Assistant City Manager asks, "How are we treating the people we are providing services to?" He adds that this not only raises a host of other questions, it requires external funding as well.

Leaders working for the citizens of San Diego have a vision of the work place as a microcosm of society. Their mission is to create a work place that values diversity and to create a community that does the same.

Age is part of diversity. Those 40 years and older are a legally protected group. Yet age did not emerge as a significant diversity issue. A focus group for older workers, convened to identify age-related issues, attracted only four persons. Employees who participated in diversity training said that age was not one of the issues that emerged.

There are several possible reasons:

1. People are reluctant to be identified as an older worker, feeling that older means you are "over the hill." A 47-year-old interviewee said, "I don't think of myself as aging. When I am talking about age, I feel I am talking about another group, not me."

2. Age is often an individual's second group identification. Several employees who

"Diversity can't stand by itself."

participated in the training reported that older black or Hispanic men typically discussed ethnicity, not age.

3. The pressures and issues related to race, gender and sexual orientation are so intense that age literally takes "a second seat." Groups have been formed by city employees for women engineers, gay and lesbians and Filipino Americans. No older workers' group has been formed.

Everyone ages — men, women, blacks, whites, Hispanics, Asians, Native Americans, gays, lesbians and all other employees. Because of this, there is a need to develop a safe forum where age concerns can be discussed, especially as they relate to stereotypes, opportunities for promotion and training, getting good assignments and acquiring competitive skills.

If promotion appears unlikely after a certain age, one should determine if this plateau effect is based on performance or on some other factor.

There is a need to learn about the normal aging process and its relationship to work performance, and the importance and value of individual differences at all ages and stages of life.

There is a need to continue creating awareness of the very subtle forms of age discrimination that are prevalent in all sectors, and to address them as aggressively as other aspects of diversity.

The 15 steps recommended for developing a diversity commitment are only a starting point or a checkpoint to review an existing effort. These steps can be adopted by city, county or state agencies or modified for use in the private sector.

The Diversity Commitment from the City of San Diego has met important criteria. According to a Conference Board study of 130 companies, survey participants identified three essential steps in embedding diversity into an organization's value system: establishing management responsibility, incorporating accountability into performance management and providing supportive human resource policies (The Conference Board, 1992). The City of San Diego has modeled all three essentials.

AARP wishes to thank the employees of the City of San Diego for sharing their valuable experiences and insights on diversity with us, especially Jack McGrory, City Manager; Dr. Trudy Sopp, Director of the Centre for Organization Effectiveness; and Dr. Oliver Brown, Specialist in Organizational Effectiveness, who made this Diversity Commitment happen.

There is a need to learn about the normal aging process and its relationship to work performance, and the importance and value of individual differences at all ages and stages of life.

Exhibits

Exhibit 1: Interview Questions for The City of San Diego

Exhibit 2: Focus Group Questionnaire

Exhibit 3: Supervisors' Diversity Commitment Pre-Session Questionnaire

Exhibit 4: Supervisors' Diversity Commitment Post-Session Questionnaire

Exhibit 5: Invitation from City Manager to Attend Diversity Training

Exhibit 6: Learning Goals

Exhibit 7: What Is Meant by Cultural Diversity?

Exhibit 8: Speakers' Bureau Topics

Exhibit 1 • Interview Questions for the City of San Diego

1) Use one or two words to describe working for the City of San Diego.

2) What is going well?

3) What are you concerned about?

4) A norm or practice that prevents the City of San Diego from being the BEST organization it can be?

5) To be a successful person in the organization, what do you need to do? What is the formula for success?

6) What is the climate/culture like for:

   a) White women
   b) White men
   c) Asian women
   d) Asian men
   e) Hispanic/Latino women
   f) Hispanic/Latino men
   g) Black/African American women
   h) Black/African American men
   i) Filipino women
   j) Filipino men
   k) Native American women

l) Native American men

m) People from different Middle Eastern countries

n) People different in other ways (e.g., style, religion, ethnicity, age, physical ability, sexual orientation)

7) How do you see the City Manager's Office and the Department Directors supporting and utilizing style, racial, gender and other differences?

8) What could supervisors and managers do, or continue to do, to better support the career development/enhancement of a) white women, b) people of color and c) other differences?

9) What, if anything, do you see blocking your development/enhancement?

10) What is facilitating or has facilitated your career development/enhancement?

11) As a city, are there segments of our citizenry that receive less or more than equitable service? If so, who?

12) To make things better, I recommend...

13) Also, I would like to say:

Exhibit 2
City of San Diego Diversity Program
Focus Group Questionnaire

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THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Based on your experience working in the City of San Diego, please rate the organization on the following 1 to 10 scales by circling the number which represents your opinion.

1. How do you feel the City does at encouraging teamwork from its employees?

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
   poor satisfactory excellent

2. How would you rate the respect your superiors demonstrate for you?

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
   poor satisfactory excellent

3. How receptive is your division toward your ideas?

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
   poor satisfactory excellent

4. How would you rate supervisory support for employees who have work conflicts that were caused by family concerns/problems?

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
   poor satisfactory excellent

5. Do your superiors show appreciation for individual differences (i.e., ethnic, gender, age, disabilities, sexual orientation, etc.)?

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
   needs much work satisfactory doing very well

6. How would you rate the communication between men and women within your division?

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
   poor satisfactory excellent

7. How would you rate the communication between different ethnic groups within your division?

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
   poor satisfactory excellent

8. Are your performance evaluations conducted in a fair manner?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
poor				satisfactory					excellent

9. Does your division encourage you to perform your best on your job?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
needs much work				satisfactory					doing very well

10. Please rate your overall job satisfaction.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
very dissatisfied				neutral					very satisfied

11. How do you see your career in the City of San Diego (circle only one)?

1. Long-term (5 years or more)
2. Short-term (2 to 5 years)
3. Will retire by 1996
4. Leaving the organization (within 2 years)
5. Unsure, depends on the future
6. Other (please explain) _____

12. Please indicate the three items which need to be improved/enhanced in order for you to make a greater contribution in your work. (1 = highest priority, 2 = next priority, 3 = last priority)

_____ Career development and mentoring
_____ Compensation
_____ Flexible Benefit Package
_____ Job reward and recognition
_____ Performance review
_____ Personnel Benefits (i.e., personal or sick leave, etc.)
_____ Promotions
_____ Recruitment, hiring and orientation

13. How many years of service do you have in the City?

1. Less than 5 years
2. 5 to 10 years
3. 11 to 15 years
4. 16 years or more

14. Please indicate your ethnic group.

1. Asian
2. Black/African American
3. Filipino
4. Hispanic/Latino
5. Middle Eastern
6. Native American
7. White (other than Middle Eastern)
8. Other: _____

(If you disagree with your above ethnic title please complete 14b)

14b. Current ethnic title _____

What title would you prefer to be called? _____

15. Please indicate your gender.

1. Woman
2. Man

16. What is your age?

1. 30 years or less
2. 31 to 40 years old
3. 41 to 54 years old
4. 55 years or older

17. Are you physically disabled?

1. Yes
2. No

18. What is your marital status?

1. Married
2. Single
3. Divorced

19. What is the highest educational level you have completed?

1. Elementary school
2. High school
3. College
4. Graduate school

20. Do you have any dependent children in your home?

1. Yes
2. No

21. Do you have elders dependent on your immediate family for their care?

1. Yes
2. No

Exhibit 3 • City of San Diego
Supervisors' Diversity Commitment Educational Session
Pre-Session Questionnaire

This questionnaire is designed to give you an opportunity to reflect on your feelings and thoughts towards diversity in the workplace, as well as provide you with a way to evaluate the impact of your educational session. It also enables the Diversity Commitment Team to be aware of your experiences before the session begins.

The original is to be sent to Oliver Brown, with the Organization Effectiveness Program Diversity Commitment Team, MS-8A and keep a copy for your reference. All information will remain anonymous.

Date of session scheduled to attend: _____

Please indicate your educational session participant status:

_____ **Supervisor** _____ **Learning Partner (co-worker)**

1. To what extent are you **aware** of the Diversity Commitment Program in the City?

1	2	3	4	5
to no extent		moderately		to a great extent

Comment: _____

_____

2. To what extent are you **aware** of diversity issues in the workplace?

1	2	3	4	5
to no extent		moderately		to a great extent

Comment: _____

_____

3. How comfortable are you in **supervising, or being a co-worker** with employees who are different from you?

1	2	3	4	5
to no extent		moderately		to a great extent

Comment: _____

_____

4. Using the following scale and reference list, please indicate what your **general comfort level** is with people that are different than you by:

a. Age:

1	2	3	4	5
least comfortable		moderately comfortable		most comfortable

b. Ethnicity:

1	2	3	4	5
least comfortable		moderately comfortable		most comfortable

c. Gender:

1	2	3	4	5
least comfortable		moderately comfortable		most comfortable

d. Physical Disability:

1	2	3	4	5
least comfortable		moderately comfortable		most comfortable

e. Sexual Orientation:

1	2	3	4	5
least comfortable		moderately comfortable		most comfortable

5. How **receptive** are you to the input and suggestions of employees that are different from you?

1	2	3	4	5
to no extent		moderately		to a great extent

Comment: _____

_____

6. How many years of service do you have with the City?
(Please circle appropriate response)

1. Less than 5 years
2. 5 to 10 years
3. 11 to 15 years
4. 16 to 20 years
5. 21 to 25 years
6. 26 to 30 years
7. 30+ years

7. Please specify any special accommodations that you will need during the educational sessions (auditory assistance, wheelchair accommodations, etc.):

_____

_____

_____

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• THANK YOU •

Exhibit 4 • City of San Diego
Supervisors' Diversity Commitment Educational Session
Post-Session Questionnaire

As a participant in the recent Diversity Educational Session, we would like your feedback as to how the session has influenced your work environment and interactions as a supervisor or learning partner. Please complete and send back to Oliver Brown, with the Organization Effectiveness Program Diversity Commitment Team, MS-8A. Your input will assist the team in evaluating the success of your educational session, as well as future Diversity Educational Sessions.

Date of session attended: _____

Please indicate your educational session participant status:

_____ **Supervisor** _____ **Learning Partner (co-worker)**

1. As a result of your Diversity Educational Session, to what extent have you become **more aware** of diversity issues in the workplace?

1	2	3	4	5
to no extent		moderately		to a great extent

Comment: _____

_____

2. As a result of the Diversity Educational Session, to what extent have you become more comfortable in **supervising, or being a co-worker** with employees who are different from you?

1	2	3	4	5
to no extent		moderately		to a great extent

Comment: _____

_____

3. Using the following scale and reference list, please indicate what your **general comfort level** is with people that are different than you by:

a. Age:

1	2	3	4	5
least comfortable		moderately comfortable		most comfortable

b. Ethnicity:

1	2	3	4	5
least comfortable		moderately comfortable		most comfortable

c. Gender:

1	2	3	4	5
least comfortable		moderately comfortable		most comfortable

d. Physical Disability:

1	2	3	4	5
least comfortable		moderately comfortable		most comfortable

e. Sexual Orientation:

1	2	3	4	5
least comfortable		moderately comfortable		most comfortable

4. As a result of the Diversity Educational Session, to what extent are you **more receptive** to the input and suggestions of employees that are different from you?

1	2	3	4	5
to no extent		moderately		to a great extent

Comment: _____

_____

5. How much did your **understanding of others increase** as a result of the Diversity Educational Session?

1	2	3	4	5
to no extent		moderately		to a great extent

Comment: _____

_____

6. As a result of the Diversity Educational Session, to what extent have your **communication abilities improved** with employees that are different from you?

1	2	3	4	5
to no extent		moderately		to a great extent

Comment: _____

_____

7. As a result of the Diversity Educational Session, to what extent has your **respect and value** of employees that are different from you increased?

1	2	3	4	5
to no extent		moderately		to a great extent

Comment: _____

_____

8. As a result of the Diversity Educational Session, to what extent have you **attempted to make any changes** in either the workplace or as an individual?

1	2	3	4	5
to no extent		moderately		to a great extent

Comment: _____

_____

What were those changes? _____

_____

_____

How were they received by co-workers and/or staff?

1	2	3	4	5
negatively		moderately		positively

Comment: _____

_____

9. To what extent do you believe the Diversity Commitment is **making or bringing about positive changes** that make work life better for the organization?

1	2	3	4	5
to no extent		moderately		to a great extent

Comment: _____

_____

10. Please comment on the **facilitation and facilitators** of your session. When possible, please be specific.

11. What were the **most valuable aspects** about the educational session for you?

12. What were the **least valuable aspects** about the educational session for you?

13. Are there any "hot items" or issues around diversity that you think need to be covered or addressed more in-depth?

14. What still needs to be done in the organization to move the Diversity Commitment forward?

15. What could be done to make the four-day education more effective?

16. How many years of service do you have with the City?
(Please circle appropriate response)

1. Less than 5 years
2. 5 to 10 years
3. 11 to 15 years
4. 16 to 20 years
5. 21 to 25 years
6. 26 to 30 years
7. 30+ years

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• THANK YOU •

Exhibit 5
Invitation from City Manager to Attend Diversity Training

CITY OF SAN DIEGO

M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: January 11, 1994

TO:

FROM: Jack McGrory, City Manager

SUBJECT: SUPERVISORS' DIVERSITY EDUCATIONAL SESSION

You have been nominated by your Department/Division to attend a Supervisors' Diversity Educational Session. The session you have been selected to attend is February 8-11, 1994, at Marina Village, Terrace Room, 1936 Quivira Way (map on reverse side). The times are as follows:

Tuesday, February 8	**8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.**
Wednesday, February 9	**8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.**
Thursday, February 10	**8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.**
Friday, February 11	**8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.**

In addition, please plan to attend a group orientation session Wednesday, February 2, 1994. You will have the opportunity to meet the trainers, find out more information, and respond to their interview questions. The orientation is **REQUIRED** as it prepares you for successful participation in the educational session. Please attend the appropriate group interview as follows:

City Administration Building, 12th Floor, Conference Room B

Men of Color	8:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.
Women of Color	9:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.
Gay & Lesbian	11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
White Men	1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.
White Women	2:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

*** Remember: The orientation is required for entrance into the session. ***

The sessions are held on City time. Please alert your supervisor so your Department/Division can make all arrangements to allow you to attend. **Attendance at all four days is necessary.** So if you are not available for each day please notify your Deputy Director who will contact the Diversity Staff to make arrangements for a replacement. If you have any questions, please call Oliver Brown (236-6960) of the Organization Effectiveness Program (OEP). The Diversity Commitment has my strongest support and I look forward to seeing you at the session.

Jack McGrory
City Manager

Exhibit 6
The City of San Diego Diversity Commitment
Educational Sessions for Supervisors
Learning Goals

DIRECTIONS: Please complete the following and bring with you to the Session. Use the space provided or other paper as necessary.

1. **ONE** thing I would like to learn more about from the Session on Diversity that would help me at **work** is...

_____

_____

_____

2. **ONE** thing I would like to learn from people of the other gender, and/or a different race/ethnicity, and/or sexual orientation, and/or other significant difference is...

_____

_____

_____

3. At the upcoming Session, to increase the chance of reaching my learning goals, I will...

_____

_____

_____

_____

Participant's Signature

Exhibit 7
Question One • What Is Meant by Cultural Diversity?

Cultural Diversity in organizations means including people of different cultures, races, genders, nationalities, styles and other attributes. More importantly, a culturally diverse organization recognizes, supports, values and utilizes people's differences and similarities in support of the organization's objectives.

People vary in many ways, some subtle and some not so subtle. While we also often have substantial similarities, each of us is ultimately unique. Aspects of our uniqueness may be of an individual nature, or an element of identity which ties us to others, such as:

- Race
- Language
- Skills
- Background
- Age
- Religion
- Nationality
- Ideas
- Mental abilities
- Family
- Health
- Gender
- Style
- Talents
- Experiences
- Customs
- Sexual orientation
- Culture
- Education
- Physical abilities
- Class

Organizations can learn to harness aspects of uniqueness. Leaders can value differences as a source of strength and creativity for the organization. Results demonstrate that utilizing people's uniqueness enhances communication, problem-solving and decision-making skills, thereby improving organizational productivity and performance.

Exhibit 8
Speakers' Bureau Topics

- African-American Issues and Perspectives
- Americans with Disabilities Act
- Arab-American Issues and Perspectives
- Asian Issues and Perspectives
- Attraction and Sexual Harassment
- Child-Care Issues
- The Diversity Commitment Program
- Diversity Issues and the Community
- EEO Law
- Facilitation of City of San Diego Norms and Values for Department Heads
- Filipino Issues and Perspectives
- Gay and Lesbian Issues and Perspectives
- Hate/Violence/Hate Crimes
- Hispanic/Latino Issues and Perspectives
- The Human Relations Commission
- Issues for Women Engineers
- Jewish Issues and Perspectives
- Living and Working with HIV and AIDS in the Workplace
- Mentoring
- Middle Eastern Issues and Perspectives
- Multilingual Issues
- Muslim Issues and Perspectives
- Native American Issues and Perspectives
- Personal Safety Issues in the Workplace
- Persons with Disabilities Issues and Perspectives

- Resolving Cross-Cultural Conflict with Sensitivity and Respect
- Seeing the City Through the Diverse Public's Eyes
- Straight Talk
- Tolerance for Different Religions at Work
- What Nurturing and Support Look Like
- White Men Issues and Perspectives
- White Women Issues and Perspectives
- Women of Color in Non-Traditional Jobs
- Women and Men Style Differences
- The Working Parent and Her/His Issues

References

Diversity Update, The City of San Diego.

McKinnie, R.L. (Jan. 24, 1993) "City Seeks Staff Unity," *The San Diego Union-Tribune.*

Winterle, M.J. *Work Force Diversity: Corporate Challenges, Corporate Responses.* New York: The Conference Board, 1992.

AARP is the nation's leading organization for people age 50 and over. It serves their needs and interests through legislative advocacy, research, informative programs, and community services provided by a network of local chapters and experienced volunteers throughout the country. The organization also offers members a wide range of special membership benefits, including *Modern Maturity* and the monthly *Bulletin*.

AARP's Work Force Programs Department is educating employers, employees and the general public about retirement and employment issues affecting older workers. Through its program, publications and volunteer activities, the Department strives to achieve the following goals:

- To assist employers to recruit, manage, train and retain an aging and increasingly more diverse work force;
- To help empower persons to make informed employment and retirement decisions;
- To advocate the enforcement of nondiscriminatory rules, policies and practices related to age in the work place; and
- To develop innovative programs and models that will increase work options available to older persons.

The Work Force Programs Department offers resources to employers interested in using the skills and experience of older workers. Among the resources available are:

- *Working Age*, a free bimonthly newsletter highlighting employment trends;
- NOWIS, a data base of information about how more than 150 employers utilize older workers;
- Management guides and training manuals; and
- Worker education materials.

For more information on training older workers and other topics listed above, please contact:

Business Partnerships
AARP Work Force Programs Department
601 E Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20049
(202) 434-2090

American Association of Retired Persons
Work Force Programs Department
601 E Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20049

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